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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INVESTIGATION CLEARS OFFICER INVOLVED IN UPPER MORELAND TOWNSHIP SHOOTING

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (Nov. 13, 2023)—Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin R. Steele announced today that the investigation of a fatal shooting on Oct. 8, 2023, by an Upper Moreland Township police officer has concluded and has determined that the shooting was a lawful use of force.

The investigation of the shooting was conducted by the Montgomery County Detective Bureau, as is protocol for any officer-involved shooting in Montgomery County. The investigation found that the incident began at 5:06 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 8, 2023, when emergency medical personnel and police responded to a 911 call for a suicidal female who may be armed with a firearm. As paramedics arrived in an ambulance, the woman, later identified as 69-year-old Mary Meister, was standing at the front door of the residence and pointed the firearm toward them. The ambulance continued driving up the street, and EMTs told arriving police what they had observed.

When Upper Moreland police officers arrived at the home, Meister was on the front porch holding a silver handgun. An officer began negotiating with Meister, attempting for more than 12 minutes to get her to put down the weapon and talk with him. She refused to comply. A Hatboro police officer arrived with a less-than-lethal weapon and shot four rubber batons at Meister, striking her once in the leg. She checked her leg, then raised her weapon and pointed it directly at the officers. An Upper Moreland police officer discharged his weapon, and Meister fell to the ground. Police rendered aid to Meister, and ambulance personnel transported her to Abington Memorial Hospital, where she was pronounced dead at 5:48 p.m.

A silver Smith and Wesson .38 caliber revolver was located adjacent to Meister's body. Detectives found that the firearm was purchased by Meister on Aug. 25, 2023. A handwritten note was recovered from inside Meister's residence, indicating her intention to commit suicide.

"Officers arrived on scene, and an experienced negotiator talked with Meister, attempting to convince her to put down her firearm. But she repeatedly refused and instead, pointed the firearm directly at officers," said Steele. "Our investigation

determined the facts of this case supported the use of deadly force, and therefore, did not warrant any criminal charge against the officer involved.”

In Pennsylvania, the use of deadly force by a law enforcement officer is governed by Section 508 of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code. A law enforcement officer is “justified in using deadly force only when he believes that such force is necessary to prevent death or serious bodily injury to himself or such other person...” 18 Pa.C.S.A. §508(a). In addition, the use of deadly force by law enforcement officers is justified to defeat...the escape of a person who possesses a deadly weapon, or otherwise indicates that he will endanger human life or inflict serious bodily injury unless arrested without delay. 18 Pa.C.S.A. §508(a)(1)(i)(ii).

Approved for release:
Kevin R. Steele